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A Municipal Program. Report of a Committee of the National Municipal League. Adopted by the League, November 17, 1899, together with explanatory and other papers. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900. 8vo, pp. xi+246.

THIS work consists of a draft of proposed constitutional amendments and a general municipal incorporation act, both broadly enough drawn to fit the circumstances of any of the states, and a discussion of the need for, and provisions of, these proposed changes by eight well-known students of municipal government; namely, Messrs. John A. Fairlie, Horace E. Deming, Albert Shaw, Frank J. Goodnow, Leo S. Rowe, Bird S. Coler, Charles Richardson and Delos F. Wilcox.

Nominally the volume is the outcome of the labors of this special committee for two full years: it actually embodies the results of the work of the League since its organization six years ago. It offers the keenest analysis of the causes of our present municipal conditions and presents at the same time the most philosophic and systematic scheme for improving the organization and administration of our city government yet worked out. Doubtless the plan will be branded as *doctrinaire* and unworkable by those who have no knowledge of the subject, and, who suppose that they have an interest in maintaining the present bad conditions. The program is, in fact, in advance of the current bad traditions on city government, and therein lies its chief claim to consideration. All the propositions are not likely to be accepted at once, but, at least, we have now a definite and reasonable ideal towards which to work.

The program, recognizing democracy as a fact, attempts to develop its virtues and to curb its evil tendencies. The main attempt is to reduce to a minimum state legislative interference, and to give the cities the largest possible measure of home rule in regard to matters of purely local interest: while the city is to become the agent of the state in the administration of state functions within the municipal boundaries to a much greater extent than heretofore. When acting as the agent of the state, the city is to be subject to a strict administrative not legislative, control, to be exercised largely through state audit, inspection and partial publication of the accounts of the cities, which must be kept on a uniform basis. The city, under the proposed plan ceases to be a body of enumerated powers. It is allowed, under the constitution and general laws, to form its own charter, and, to enter

upon all kinds of activity necessary in its own opinion to satisfy the local needs of its inhabitants.

A sharp distinction is made between legislation and administration; the first is in the charge of a single-chambered council, which has the residuum of governmental power, the other is solely dependent on the mayor. The council elected on a general ticket for six years — one third going out of office with the mayor, who serves but two years — is to elect (and may remove) the comptroller, whose term as well as that of all the appointees of the mayor is for an indefinite period. The mayor, as the responsible head of the administration, has the absolute power of appointing and removing all administrative officers except the comptroller, save in so far as he is restrained by the severest civil service provisions yet suggested in America.

It will be observed that elections are greatly simplified by abolishing all elective officers except the mayor and the councillors. These officers are to be elected at a time other than that at which state or national officers are elected. They must be nominated by petition and elected by secret ballot, on which the names for each office must appear alphabetically, and be voted for individually and not by party lists.

The home rule idea is not pressed so far for the sake of consistency as to permit the city to grant street privileges or franchises *ad libitem*. Such privileges are to be limited by the state in many ways apart from a strict time limit. Likewise the state fixes a definite limit to the power of the city to incur indebtedness. The cities are given unlimited right to enter upon industrial enterprises which it is supposed will bring an income. The debt incurred for such enterprises is to be excluded from the legal debt limit until the receipts from such an enterprise fail to pay expenses. This provision seems to me entirely inadequate and dangerous. A safer way would seem to be to make the debt limit somewhat larger and then include such debts within it in order that the city may not enter upon too many such enterprises at once; or instead of making the bonds for such enterprises a general obligation of the city, make them a special lien only on the investment for which they are issued. The proposition of the committee ignores the fact that the evil is done, if it be an evil, as soon as the initial investment of a large fixed capital in such an enterprise is unwisely made, and that, although the original investment may have been unwise it might easily be worse to abandon the work than

to keep it up, while to attempt to carry it under the proposed regulation might seriously cripple the ordinary services of the city.

Various other details of the program will doubtless fail to command the support of serious and disinterested students of municipal government. Nevertheless the work marks a great step forward, and will surely prove invaluable to the cause of good municipal government in the United States.

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Monopolies and Trusts. By RICHARD T. ELY, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Wisconsin. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900. 12mo, pp. xi + 278.

The Trust Problem. By JEREMIAH WHIPPLE JENKS, Professor of Political Science, Cornell University. New York: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1900. 8vo, pp. xix + 281.

THE mad rush toward industrial consolidation which has characterized the commercial history of the United States during the past two years has given fresh impetus to the investigation of this phase of nineteenth century industrialism, and a considerable crop of books on the trust question has already made its appearance. Especially noteworthy among these are the recent books of Professors Ely and Jenks; they are the most thoughtful and instructive.

Dr. Ely has long been known as an interested student of modern monopoly, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find him devoting the best and largest portion of his present volume to a consideration of the alleged monopolistic tendencies of trusts. In the course of four chapters devoted to a discussion of the meaning of monopoly, the causes of monopoly, the law of monopoly price, and the limits of monopoly, Dr. Ely repeatedly expresses the opinion that monopoly means something more than business on a large scale, and that mere mass of capital is never a cause of monopoly. "No one," says he (p. 174), "has yet adduced an instance of an important monopoly resting upon mere mass of capital or upon mere combination. In all of the alleged cases of "capitalistic monopolies," he insists that the efficient cause of monopoly will be found to be either the union of an ordinary business with a natural monopoly, or some species of favoritism, etc. Ordinary